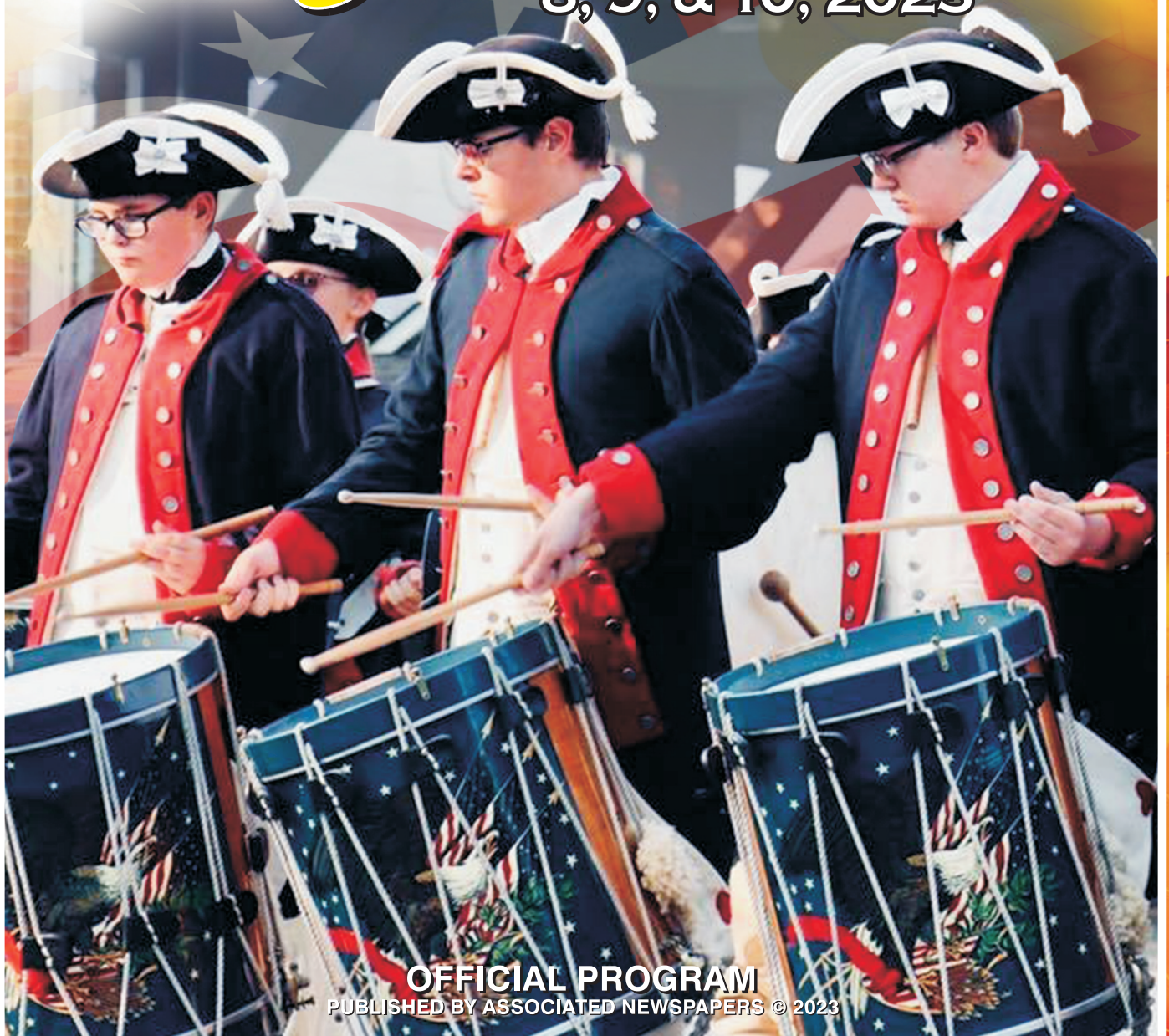


67TH ANNUAL
FALL FESTIVAL OF
Plymouth
SEPTEMBER
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A community effort

Plymouth Fall Festival unites civic group fundraising

Fall Festival President Andrea Gerber is no stranger to organizing public events.

She spent 13 years planning community events at Wayne State University before taking her current position as director of events at the Westin Hotel in Southfield. The Plymouth Fall Festival, however, is the most unique among the multitude of projects she has taken on. This is her first year as president of the Fall Festival board but she has been involved with the festival for about 6 years as a representative of the Plymouth-Canton Little League organization which organizes the Bingo games each year.

She said she and the other board members, all affiliated with non-profit

*These are really
great people
all doing something
for the community.*

it groups, are “excited” about the festival this year and hope to match the success of last year. “We met last week and the energy was really positive. These are really great people all doing something for the community,” she said. Each of the committee members represents a non-profit group in the Plymouth community.

“We had the best year last year,”

she said. “Bingo was the most successful it has ever been and carnival ticket sales were through the roof. Of course, we had really good weather, too.” She said last year the bingo game in The Gathering had more than 300 players, which might be a record turnout.

Gerber explained that the executive committee of the Fall Festival board begins planning for next year’s festival as soon as the event ends Sunday afternoon. “It takes a whole year of planning, the time ebbs and flows, but the planning cycle is a year.”

The details involved in organizing the massive effort include particu-

See **Event**, page 4



lars that most visitors would never consider. "We have to figure out things like how to get the electrical wiring complete for the craft booths, where to put the car show, make sure we have the bingo license and any number of other details," she said. It is time consuming for everyone involved, she agreed, but noted that all the committee members volunteer their time to help the community.

This year, Gerber, said, they are "maxed out" at the craft show with vendors where there will be more booths than ever, she said. "We have a lot more non-profit participation."

Gerber and her husband, Randy, have lived in Plymouth since 2009. They both became involved with the



Andrea Gerber

Little League group when their sons, Luke, now 14, and Kyle, now 11,

began playing t-ball. She began representing the group with the Fall Festival about 6 years ago as a volunteer with the Bingo fundraiser. She will be on hand at the Gathering again this year from 6 until 9 p.m. calling numbers and has elicited her husband's help, too. "It's all hands on deck for the games," she said, noting that the bingo games are the second largest fundraiser for Little League each year.

"I don't think most people who come to the festival realize that every dime they spend is affiliated with a non-profit organization and goes right back into the community," she said. "That's what makes this event so unique. Everyone involved is tied to a non-profit," Gerber concluded.



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Thrill of the grill

Rotary Barbeque committee works all year on Sunday event

Preparing 10,000 chicken dinners in one afternoon is not an easy task. It takes more than 700 volunteers, along with Rotary Club members and families, to prepare the dinners which are a decades-old Sunday tradition during the Fall Festival.

Those volunteers, many from the local Plymouth Canton Community Schools athletic teams, clubs, bands and other groups, are an integral part of the complicated process in producing the meals, explained 2023 Barbeque Chairman Andy Savage.

"We just couldn't do it without

”
*We really couldn't
do this without
the volunteers.*

them," Savage said. "They come from the marching band, the athletic teams, our Rotary Interact Club. We really couldn't do this without the volunteers."

Savage, in his seventh year as a member of the barbeque committee, has worked his way through every step in the intense year-long planning and preparation for the once-a-year event. Committee members who plan and manage the massive event include Eric Joy who handles the purchasing of all the necessary supplies for the barbecue. That, Savage said, is a huge and complicated job. Bari Livsey oversees "all things tickets" this year while Doug Willett has taken on the compli-

See **Committee**, page 4

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Barbeque Committee Chairman Andy Savage is assisted this year by Rotarian Bari Livsey, far right, who oversees “all things tickets” for the Chicken Barbeque while Doug Willett has taken on scheduling of volunteer shifts. Todd Rafka assigns jobs to the crew and Gary Stoltz, who chaired the event last year, acts as an advisor to the committee.

Committee from page 5

cated scheduling of the numerous volunteer shifts. Todd Rafka is the man who makes all the club member job assignments while Gary Stoltz, who chaired the event last year, acts as an advisor to the committee.

“This is a team effort of the committee members, the past chairman, the Rotarians and the volunteers,” Savage said. “Without them, this couldn’t happen.”

Planning for the barbeque takes military precision as the pits are constructed in the parking lot behind The Gathering. Rotary members haul hundreds of cinder blocks into place and fill them with charcoal to create fire pits for the grills. Some of the cinder blocks have been in use since the earliest barbeque decades ago.

“Last year, as we were packing up all the equipment, I was making men-

tal notes for things we needed to do this year,” Savage said. “We start planning right away and the closer the date, the more time it takes each week to make sure everything is organized and taken care of. We met maybe monthly, then every couple of weeks and now every week,” he said. “It is time consuming, but it really is a labor of love.”

Last year, the committee opted to light the charcoal pits a half hour earlier than in previous years which moved everything by a half hour, Savage said, and made dinners available a little sooner. That change will continue this year, he said, and again this year, tickets are available online, a convenience that has worked well, he added.

The barbeque is the largest fundraiser of the Rotary Club, Savage explained, and the money earned all goes back into the community, primarily in scholarships for local students, both academic and vocational. He said

last year the barbeque generated about \$33,000 after all expenses were paid. The funds were used for scholarships and a number of other civic efforts and donations to other groups in the community, through the Rotary Foundation.

Savage has been a member of the Plymouth Noon Rotary Club for 8 years. He is currently an administrator with Superior Ambulance and oversees the City of Northville and Southfield stations. “The patience and sacrifice of my wife, Karen, should not go unnoticed,” Savage said. “I couldn’t do this without that family support.”

Dinners will be available at The Gathering across from Kellogg Park from 11 a.m. until sold out and at a drive-through pickup location at West Middle School, 44401 W. Ann Arbor Trail. Pre-sale tickets are priced at \$15 and available from any member of the noon club or \$17 if purchased Sunday.



FALL FESTIVAL OF

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SEPTEMBER 8, 9, & 10, 2023

B-27?

Bingo games help fund Plymouth Canton Little League

About 300 or more guests are expected at The Gathering Friday evening during the Plymouth Fall Festival, all with dabbers and bingo cards in hand.

The annual games are organized by the Plymouth Canton Little League and have become the second-largest fundraiser for the group. Andrea Gerber, who is also the president of the Fall Festival Committee this year, said she and all the board members of the organization will be on hand during

See **Bingo**, page 8



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the games which will continue from 6 until 9 p.m. This year, there will be three special Grand Slam Bingo games, one at 6:45, another at 7:45 and the third at 8:45 p.m.

Gerber said the event has a group of avid players who attend every year along with the Little League families who come to play. She said the event takes a great deal more planning and organization that people might expect for the event which has become the second-largest annual fundraiser for the group.

"It's all hands on deck for Bingo night," she said.

Players can come and go and play for any amount of time as games will be continuously called during the three hours. This year, due to rules of

the Michigan Gaming Commission, payouts will be structured and will be \$60 for a single Bingo, \$40 for a double Bingo, \$100 for a Grand Slam Single Line Bingo and \$550 for a Grand Slam Coverall.

All players must be at least 18 years of age and have a valid identification and any children younger than 18 must remain with an adult at all times. Children are not allowed to play Bingo, but they may sit with an adult player. Bingo sheets will be sold at the beginning of each round and single and double games are priced at \$1 per sheet. The Grand Slam sheets are \$5 each or \$10 for three sheets.

Payment must be in cash, organizers stressed and the sheets must be marked with a dabber. Those will be

available for sale.

Plymouth-Canton Little League is the only youth baseball and softball program in Plymouth and Canton chartered by Little League International, the same organization that hosts the Little League World Series. The group offers supervised baseball programs for boys and girls of all skill levels, ages 5 through 14. In addition to the regular spring baseball and softball season, the league offers additional playing opportunities through baseball and softball clinics and tournament play. Plymouth-Canton Little League operates T-Ball, Machine Pitch, Minor, Major, and Junior divisions according to Little League International. For more information, email plycanlittleleague@gmail.com.

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Al Dente

Spaghetti Dinner to be served by Morning Rotary Club

The Saturday night Spaghetti Dinner will be back at the Plymouth Fall Fest in 2023...for the first time since COVID. This will be the 15th year (- 3) that the Rotary Club of Plymouth A.M. has staged the popular event. Organizers said the 4 until 8 p.m. event on Saturday, Sept. 9 promises to be better than ever:

This year, dinner for adults is an all you can eat event. The meal is ample and consists of Mama Mucci's spaghetti pasta with an authentic Italian marinara sauce topped by two generous sized and tasty Benito's meatballs. (Meatballs can be excluded for vegetarians.) Also included is an E.G. Nick's Chef's Special Italian Coleslaw salad, specialty bread from The Whitney, a Jimmy John's huge chocolate chip cookie, a bottle of spring water and all you can drink coffee or tea. The dinner is prepared and served by members of the Rotary Club of Plymouth A.M. (the morning Rotary club), under the supervision of Chef Frank Agostini from E.G. Nick's and Tim Patino, former chef and now general manager of The Whitney restaurant in Detroit.

Back by popular demand, this year children 5 and younger eat for free when accompanied by one paid adult meal. One free children's meal for one paid adult meal. Dinner tickets for adults are \$12 if purchased in advance from any member of the morning Rotary at rotaryplymoutham.com or by calling (734) 254-6475, or at The Plymouth Chamber of Commerce Office, E.G. Nick's, or the



Fall Fest Dinner Ticket booth at Penniman and Main Street on Sept. 8 and until noon on Sept 9. Adult tickets are \$15 if purchased the day of the event. On Saturday, tickets may be purchased at the Spaghetti Dinner tent from noon to closing or until the meals are gone.

Also back by popular demand, diners with advance purchase tickets may drive through and pick up dinners at the E.G. Nick's parking lot with entry off Harvey Street.

This year, the Spaghetti Dinner has gone green and all of the cartons, cups, dining utensils and carriers are biodegradable, if possible. Large, heavy-duty cloth shopping bags are included, compliments of Travel Leaders and





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Globus Tours/Avalon Cruises.

Nearly 20 years ago, the Rotary A.M. Spaghetti Dinner was launched in order to build The Miracle League of Plymouth baseball field. That field, once the club's great dream, is long-since a reality. It is located in the recreation area behind PARC.

Proceeds from the dinner this year will be used to provide thousands of dollars in college and vocational school scholarships for youngsters who have overcome major challenges in order to graduate from high school; additional special needs equipment for the youngsters at the Allen School Infant and Pre-School Special Education (IPSEP) Program; Thanksgiving dinners and Christmas household staples for several Plymouth area families in cooperation with the Plymouth Goodfellows Club and Rotary Shelter Boxes for Emergency Relief wherever and whenever natural disasters strike around the world, a spokesperson explained.

The Spaghetti Dinner Tent is located in the parking lot behind E.G. Nick's, at 500 Forest Ave., downtown Plymouth. Entry is easiest off South Harvey Street. Parking (by contri-

bution) may be available in the E.G. Nick's lot, the Plymouth Canton Community Schools parking lot across the street and in several lots in the immediate area. An Italian Street Café, complete with strolling minstrels, friendly wait-staff and loads of great food, awaits diners at the dinner this year.

Organizers suggested that those planning class reunions and family gatherings consider meeting at the Rotary Spaghetti Dinner and allow them to do the prep work, the catering and the clean-up for the event.

Founded in 1996, The Rotary Club of Plymouth A.M. still is one of the youngest service clubs in Plymouth. Members say they actually enjoy getting up early each Tuesday morning and having a good time together over breakfast. Meetings take place from 7 until 8:15 a.m. at PARC, Door 15, in downtown Plymouth. Individuals who subscribe to an attitude of "Service Above Self" are always welcome and invited to attend.

For additional information about Plymouth Rotary A.M., please contact Jared Sparr, 2023-24 club president, at (734) 254-6475 or find the club online at rotaryplymoutham.com.

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'Puurrrfect' pets

Traditional Optimist Club Pet Show set Saturday morning

The contestants usually wiggle, often drool and sometimes even attempt to plant a kiss or two on the judges in attempts to win a ribbon at one of the most popular competitions at the Fall Festival.

The traditional Optimist Club Pet Show, a decades-long tradition at the festival, will take place, as usual, beginning at 9 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 9 at the main stage in Kellogg Park. The Optimist Club Pet Show has been a mainstay of the festival for more than 40 years and accepts entries of all sizes, colors and species. Judges have seen a



multitude of dogs and cats, bunnies, snakes, rats, hamsters, a tarantula, turtles and even a few bugs.

No matter, though, as each is

assessed in categories like largest, smallest, shortest, tallest, longest and shortest ears and tail, most unusual, best costume and best trick. The

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patient judges ensure that nearly every entry leaves with a ribbon.

Again this year, there will be a pet parade prior to the judging and the Humane Society and some dog and cat rescue organizations may be on hand with adopted and adoptable pets, hoping to find permanent families.

No advance registration is required and best friends can enter their pets Saturday morning prior to the actual show. Pets can be entered in multiple categories, judges agreed.

The show is sponsored and organized each year by the local Plymouth-Canton Optimist Club which has served the local school district and several community events since 1949. The club supports programs such as spelling bees, oratorical contests, math jeopardy, bike safety rodeos, and numerous other community centered events.

The local club is part of Optimist International, a worldwide volunteer organization made up of more than 2,500 local clubs whose members work each day to make the future brighter by bringing out the best in children, in their communities and in themselves.



The club members meet at both Plymouth and Canton locations monthly and always welcome new members. Current meetings, according to the club website, are set for 6:30 p.m. the first and third Wednesday of the month at IHOP on Sheldon Road in Canton Township.

For more information about the Optimist Club, call (586) 703-4435 or email: Info@PlymouthCantonOptimists.org.

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Food for thought

Chicken Sunday inspires young author

Even adults are impressed with the effort it takes to cook 10,000 chicken dinners in one afternoon, but the Fall Festival Rotary Chicken Barbecue last year left one 7-year-old awestruck.

Scarlett Powers, now 8, went to the barbecue for the first time with her mother, Candace, a Noon Rotary Club member who was volunteering at the event. After seeing her mother and the hundreds of other volunteers in action, Scarlett knew she had her topic for a homework assignment at her second-grade class at Farrand Elementary School.

Scarlett wrote and illustrated a three-page booklet about the barbecue which was then bound into a keepsake. In the pages, the young author detailed the excitement and fun at the barbecue and how much she enjoyed the “delicious” chicken.

She will absolutely be back for chicken during the Fall Festival this year, although her mother said she isn’t sure she will be able to volunteer due to a scheduling issue.

“I’ve been a Rotary Club member for about 5 years, but we moved to Plymouth about a year ago,” Candace



Scarlett Powers

Powers said. The mother of three daughters, now 10, 8 and 6, she is employed with Lake Credit Union on Ann Arbor Road.

“They are all looking forward to the chicken dinners,” she said. “Especially Scarlett.” No word on whether there will be a sequel to Scarlett’s first literary effort.



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Friday Sept. 8

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Saturday Sept. 9

9 a.m. Optimist Club Pet Show
11 a.m. Chiefettes, Sabersteam, Rocket's Pompon squad
Noon The Plymouth Library Presents - Cameron Zvara
Join us for an afternoon of FUN with Comedy Magician
and Entertainer- Cameron Zvara! The show is filled with
magic, comedy, juggling, music, and audience
participation.
2 p.m. Dance Beat/Forever After Productions
3 p.m. Plymouth Fife and Drum Corp
4:30 p.m. Polish National Alliance Centennial Dancers
7 p.m. Geff Philips and Friends

Sunday Sept. 10

11 a.m. Midwest Tea-kwon Do
Noon Ovation Performing Arts
1 p.m. Music Adventures class for ages 6 months - age 4
Join the Music Adventure with Ms. Noelle and bond
with your favorite little one in this parent/child class with
dancing, singing, games, finger plays, instruments,
craft projects, and more.
3 until 5 p.m. Dearborn Big Band



Schedule of Events

FRIDAY, Sept. 8

Bingo 6 until 9 p.m.

(Under the Plymouth Gathering on Penniman)
Join the Plymouth Canton Little League as they sponsor BINGO at the Plymouth Fall Festival from 6 until 9 p.m. Friday. Players can join at any time as games will be continuously called. Three special Grand Slam Bingos will take place at 6:45, 7:45 and 8:45 p.m.

The Michigan Gaming Commission requires structured payouts at: Single Bingo - \$60; Double Bingo - \$40; Grand Slam Single Line Bingo - \$100 and Grand Slam Coverall - \$550

- Players must be 18 years of age and have valid ID.
- Children under 18 years of age must be with an adult at all times. They are not allowed to play Bingo, but they may sit with an adult while the adult plays.
- Single and Double Games - \$1 for 1 sheet

Carnival

Rides open at 3 p.m. Friday
11: a.m. Saturday and Sunday \$30 Ride
Wristbands available on Sunday
Tickets: \$1.50/each
Ticket packages available
Rides are 2-4 tickets each.

Craft Show

FRIDAY, SEPT. 8 - 3-8 p.m.
SATURDAY, SEPT. 9 - 9 a.m. - 8 p.m.
SUNDAY SEPT. 10 - 9 a.m. 6 p.m.

Main Street - Between Penniman Avenue and Church Street

Barbeque Rib Dinner

Vietnam Veterans of America will serve grill spare ribs with Cole slaw, macaroni and cheese, a roll and butter with a cookie from 3 until 6 p.m. in the parking lot behind E.G. Nick's, 500 Forest St. Cost is \$15 and all funds help support Vietnam veterans.

Party Tent

Live music from 8 p.m. until midnight in the Party Tent in the parking lot behind E.G. Nick's at 500 Forest Ave. Tent opens at 7 p.m. \$5 cover charge is a donation to the Plymouth Canton Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 528

SATURDAY, Sept. 9

Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast 7 a.m. until Noon

Located under The Gathering across from Kellogg Park and next to the Penn Theatre.
\$7 in advance - \$8 at the door
Children 5 and younger eat at no cost
Buy tickets at the Festival Ticket Booth at Main Street and Penniman during the festival
Kiwanis serves the children of the world. International effort to eliminate Iodine Deficiency Disorder, Michigan Mott's Children's Hospital, Scholarships and more.

Morning Rotary Club Spaghetti Dinner

Pasta, salad, roll and butter served from 4 until 8 p.m. in the Party Tent behind E.G. Nick's restaurant at 500 Forest Ave. Cost is \$12 for adults in advance or \$15 the day of the event. Drive through and carry out available.

Optimist Pet Show 9 a.m.

Children of all ages can bring their pets to Kellogg Park on Saturday morning to strut their stuff. There will be a pet parade around the park prior to the contest beginning at 9 a.m. Contests for the largest, smallest, shortest, tallest, longest and shortest ears and tail, most unusual, best costume and best trick. The Humane Society as well as dog and cat rescue organizations will be there with adopted and adoptable pets.

Party Tent

Live music at the Party Tent from 8 until midnight in the parking lot behind E.G. Nick's at 500 Forest Ave. \$5 cover fee is donated to Vietnam Veterans of America Post 528 of Plymouth-Canton.

Sunday, Sept. 10

Rotary Chicken Barbeque

11 a.m. until 5 p.m. or until sold out.

Dinner includes: 1/2 Chicken, Corn-on-the-cob, Roll w/butter, bottle of water and a cookie. Served at Kellogg Park and a take-out location at West Middle School.

Rotary Ticket Booths are located at the corners of Ann Arbor Trail and Main Street or Penniman Avenue and Main Street. Presale dinners are \$15 and at the door dinners are \$17.

Abracadabra

Plymouth library presents comic magician on stage

Midday Saturday, Fall Festival visitors will want grab a chair in the park for a fun experience, as magician and comedian Cameron Zvara takes the Kellogg Park main stage at noon.

On-stage entertainment is an area where the Plymouth Fall Festival never disappoints and Zvara is sure to keep the fun revved up, organizers said. A high-energy goofball with an impressive performance resume, he promises a fun combination of mind-blowing magic, skilled juggling and comedy that the whole family can enjoy. Plus, audience participation is

*Audience participation
is part of the fun,
so photo opportunities
will be plentiful.*

part of the fun, so photo opportunities for children (of all ages) will be plentiful.

Zvara's performance is sponsored by the Plymouth District Library; in the case of rain, the show will be moved to the library building, just east of The Gathering pavilion at 223 S. Main St

Zvara has been wowing audiences and making them laugh around the globe, and he always delivers an outrageous and unforgettable performance, library officials said. "We're thrilled to have him here at the Plymouth Fall Festival," they added.

For more information, contact the library at (734) 453-0750.

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Fall Festival Main Stage**

PLUS EVEN MORE FUN: Families coming to the pancake breakfast on Saturday morning, join us for stories at our booth in the park from 9-11am.



Sweet Saturday

Annual Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast serves up smiles

One of the oldest and sweetest traditions at the Plymouth Fall Festival will take place again this year from 7 a.m. until noon Saturday when the Kiwanis Club members serve their famous pancake breakfast.

Some volunteer members of the club begin their day as early as 5 a.m. to begin to prepare to serve the anticipated 3,000 breakfasts, which is about the usual, a spokesman said. Some of the equipment, huge mixers, grills and tables and chairs are set up Friday night in The Gathering, after the Plymouth Canton Little League Bingo games end.

The breakfasts include pancakes, sausage, juice, butter, syrup, coffee or milk and tickets are priced at \$7 if purchased in advance or \$8 Saturday morning. Children eat free, which is part of the Kiwanis Club mission: Serving the Children of the World.

The club members are an eclectic mix of genders, ages, occupations and interests, but all passionate about making the community and the world a bet-



ter place for children. The pancake breakfast is a fundraiser for the group to help provide services worldwide and locally for children.

Service is at the heart of every Kiwanis Club, a spokesman said. Members stage about 150,000 service projects and raise nearly \$100 million every year for communities, families and projects across the country and around the world. International efforts include the campaign to eliminate Iodine Deficiency Disorder while locally, the club provides financial

support for Michigan Mott's Children's Hospital and provides local student scholarships.

The Kiwanis members bring the Good Morning USA Parade to downtown Plymouth each Fourth of July and regularly add new features to Kiwanis Park on the corner of Farmer and Auburn streets. The popular popcorn wagon in Kellogg Park attracts a crowd of visitors, especially during the Friday night summer concerts in the

See **Pancakes**, page 20



Pancakes from page 19

park. The pavilion the Kiwanis members funded at Plymouth Township Park is also well used by the community.

The Kiwanis members are dedicated bell ringers during the Salvation Army Red Kettle campaign during the holidays and have a long-standing rivalry with the local noon Rotary club members to see which entity can collect the most donations.

The Kiwanis members also prepare meals for the families at Ronald McDonald House in Ann Arbor during the holidays and annually host a game area at the Special Olympics opening ceremonies. The club also sponsors a Kiwanis Aktion Club for adults living with disabilities in Plymouth.



All of these community efforts are funded by the various fundraisers the group sponsors during the year, including the sweet Saturday morning breakfast at the Fall Festival.

Advance tickets may still be avail-

able by phoning Mark Riegal (734) 718-6176 or emailing him at markriegal@gmail.com. Tickets will also be available at the ticket booth at Main Street and Penniman during the festival.



www.plymouthkiwanis.org



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66TH ANNUAL
FALL FESTIVAL OF
Plymouth
SEPTEMBER 8, 9, & 10, 2023

VETERANS PARTY TENT

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Friday September 8th 2023

Vets Rib Dinner BBQ

\$15 ea. 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Live Music - Atomic Radio

8p.m. - Midnight



Saturday September 9th 2023

AM Rotary Spaghetti Dinner

\$15 ea. 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Live Music - Power Play Detroit

8p.m. - Midnight



\$5 After 8p.m.

Friday and Saturday

\$5 Cover to get in the tent

All proceeds go to the Vietnam Veterans of Plymouth



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PAMA



Smokin' hot

Veterans serving barbeque rib dinners on Friday

The mouth-watering aroma emanating from the large charcoal grills behind E.G. Nick's is sure to draw a crowd Friday afternoon during the Fall Festival.

Members of the Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 528 will be offering barbeque spare rib dinners from 3 until 6 p.m. Sept. 8 as a fundraiser for the group. The veterans are planning to cook about 300 rib dinners during the afternoon, just prior to the live music performance in the huge tent in the restaurant parking lot.

The dinners will be available for carry-out, or to enjoy in the tent explained Bob Dew, the first vice-president of the group. The dinners include the spareribs, Cole slaw, macaroni and cheese, a roll a cookie and plastic ware for \$15. This is the first year for the spare rib dinners at the festival, although several of the veterans are experienced grillmasters.

The veterans are no strangers to the festival crowds and have been on hand at the entrance to the Party Tent for several years, checking identifications and collecting the door charge on Friday and Saturday nights. The \$5 cover charge goes directly to the veterans' group, an effort E.G. Nick's owners Tony Belli and Frank Agostini have supported for several years.

"These guys deserve all the help we can provide,"



Members of the Plymouth Canton Vietnam Veterans of America who will be barbequing ribs during the Fall Festival, march in the Fourth of July parade in Plymouth.



The Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 528 members Honor Guard is a familiar sight at veterans' events in the area. They will be showing off their grilling skills on Friday night during the Fall Festival.

Agostini said. "I've seen people drop \$20 or \$50 in the jars to contribute just to acknowledge their service. We're happy this works so well for them."

The cover charge has become one of the largest fundraisers for the group which provides clothing, food and other necessities to Vietnam and other local veterans.

"Frank and Tony have helped us out a lot. They have been very good to us," Dew said. "To thank them, we've made them honorary members of the group and gave them each a jacket."

Dew said the chapter donates to several charitable organizations to help homeless and needy veterans during the holidays. "We shop and spend about \$6,000 for clothing we donate to organizations that then distribute it to help homeless vets," he said. Those donations are the main goal of the organization which meets at the Mayflower VFW in Plymouth.

"We provide food, clothes for guys that need it," he said. This year, in addition to the door charge at the tent and the rib dinners, the veterans will also benefit from the parking fees in the lot behind the restaurant," Dew said.

Dew said the vets would fire up the grills about 1 or 2 and begin serving dinners at 3. "We'll be there until 6, or until we run out," he said.

Party time

Live entertainment in tent is festival tradition

When the crowds increase every year, the hosts at the Party Tent during the Fall Festival know they are doing something right.

For nearly a decade, E.G. Nicks on Forest Street has invited the public to the Party Tent in the back parking lot at the restaurant and every year, discounting bad weather, the crowds have increased. Frank Agostini and Tony Belli, owners at the restaurant, are now renting the largest tent possible to accommodate the crowds who fill the space Friday and Saturday evenings during the Fall Festival.

Agostini said, as he does every year, that they continue to host the two-night party because "it's a lot of fun." Agostini said the popularity of the bands booked to entertain during the

event really determine the crowd size.

Atomic Radio will entertain in the tent from 8 p.m. until midnight on Friday, Sept. 8. The group was popular with the crowd last year and has a following, so Agostini said they wanted to bring them back.

Power Play Detroit, another very popular band will entertain crowds in the tent from 8 until midnight on Saturday, Sept. 9.

"They are a big draw. People really enjoy them and they blow the roof off," Agostini said. "The crowd loved them last year. It's really going to be a great weekend," he added.

There is a \$5 cover charge at the tent each year and while normally, a cover charge might be considered a negative, during the Party Tent week-

end, most visitors welcome the fee and often contribute generously at the door. Their generosity is prompted by the real life heroes who man the door, check identifications and collect the fee. Each of them is a Vietnam veteran and a member of the Plymouth-Canton Vietnam Veterans organization in the community. The \$5 fee goes directly to the group, Agostini said, and when people become aware of the situation, they are usually more than happy to donate.

Bob Dew, the first vice-president of the Vietnam veterans group said the members are very grateful for all Agostini and Belli have done for them during the years.

See **Tent**, page 24



Power Play Detroit will perform in the E.G. Nick's Party Tent from 8 p.m. until midnight Saturday, Sept. 9 during the Fall Festival. Band members include Mike Smith, Gary Kosten, Angelique Morency, Bob Olds and Jimmy Morency. The cover band was voted the best in metro Detroit in a magazine poll that included more than one million voters



Atomic Radio will perform a wide variety of music in the E.G. Nick's Party Tent from 8 p.m. until midnight on Friday, Sept. 8 including oldies, Motown, pop, rock, 80s, 90s and current hits.

Tent from page 23

"Frank and Tony have helped us out a lot. They have been very good to us," Dow said.

The local Plymouth-Canton veterans group uses the funding to help homeless and needy veterans throughout the area.

Beer and wine are available for sale

in the tent and mixed drinks can be purchased at the bar inside E.G. Nick's during the performances.

"We all have a good time," Agostini said, "that's why we keep doing it."

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FALL FESTIVAL OF

Plymouth

SEPTEMBER 8, 9, & 10, 2023

History marches on

Plymouth Fife and Drum corps preserves music of past



A renowned symbol of Plymouth will perform on stage at 3 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 9 when members of the iconic Plymouth Fife and Drum Corps take to the stage.

The musicians, dressed in authentic uniforms of 1776-1783, will perform historic music and display some of the precision marching skills which have made the group famous across the country.

Marching musicians from The Plymouth Fife and Drum Corps have become a tradition in parades throughout the area. The non-profit organization is based in Plymouth and is an all-youth group comprising a diverse group of students ranging in age from 12 to 18.

Any student who wishes to join the elite, precision marching fife and drum corps is welcome, group officials said.

The members wear the historically accurate uniforms of the commander in chief's personal life guard of 1776-1783, a prestigious unit that protected the life and important documents of General George Washington.

The pride of Plymouth, the fife and drum corps has been a staple in state history since 1971. The primary mission of the Plymouth Fife and Drum Corps remains unchanged: to preserve the ancient art of fifing, drumming and color guard through the musical education and high-level performance of members, according to the group website.

"Our music spans the 17th to 20th centuries with an

emphasis on music played during the Revolutionary War yet, we encourage our members to compose their own original music. Presentations focus on strong personal and group discipline, musical excellence, and marching precision," the website read.

The Plymouth Fife and Drum Corps (PFDC) was the first fife and drum corps to be founded in the Midwest.



Stepping it up

Dancers preserve Polish history and heritage

The various entertainment on the Kellogg Park stage always draws large crowds, and the Polish Centennial Dancers are always one of the biggest attractions during their performance.

This year, the dancers will perform authentic Polish folk dances at 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 9 on the park stage.

The Polish National Alliance Centennial Dancers have been educating students, ages 3-18, and sharing Polish heritage and culture through music, dance and language for more than four decades. The Livonia based



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group was formed in 1980 to promote Polish heritage in Wayne, Oakland and Livingston counties.

The dancers are assigned by age group and the Fall Festival performance has traditionally featured dancers from each of the age groups. In addition to learning the authentic folk dances, the dancers have the option of a weekly Polish language class. They perform at several community events in addition to regular recitals.

New students will be accepted when the new season begins in mid-September, group members said.

While the dancers bring the music and costumes of Polish culture to the stage, the group also brings a taste of Poland to the festival at one of the most



popular food booths at the corner of Penniman and Main Street. As usual, the Polish Kitchen will offer kielbasa, pierogi and kraut along with city chicken, dill pickle soup and golabki and other Polish favorites.

For more information about the group, visit www.pnacentennial-dancers.org.



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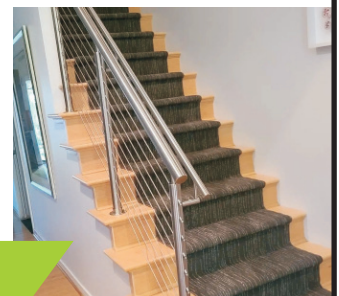
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Church again offers free parking, shuttle

The most important piece of advice every Fall Festival president and city official offers regarding the event is the same every year: Use the free shuttle service and parking provided by Praise Community Church.

The church has been offering the free service for the festival for several years and each year, more festival visitors discover just how convenient and comfortable the shuttles are. Qualified drivers deliver passengers from the large church parking lot at 45000 North Territorial Road to the center of festival fun near Plymouth City Hall. The drivers are all experienced volunteers who are familiar with the local traffic patterns and the area. The late

vans are also air conditioned and provide ample room for any souvenirs acquired during the visit.

The church is located about a quarter mile west of Sheldon Road on North Territorial and is an easy find and the shuttle ride to and from downtown Plymouth is quick, organizers said. The vans begin operating from the church about a half hour before the festival opens each day and continue transporting passengers until about a half hour after the event closes, or longer if necessary. Church officials stressed that they have never left anyone behind.

The vans leave the church in about half-hour intervals, or more often if

there are passengers waiting. "Anybody who shows up for a ride gets one," church officials stressed. Passengers can wait in the air-conditioned church building should the weekend include inclement weather, including the recent high temperatures.

The shuttle ride and parking at the church lot is also free. City officials noted that in all the years the church has been offering the shuttle service, there have been no reported problems.

"It's a great convenience and helps alleviate some of the traffic and parking situation downtown during weekend," organizers said.

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